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AN ADDRESS,

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THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FREEMEN,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

CANADIAN INDEPENDENCE:

March 24th, 1841.

BY AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.

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## A D D R E S S .

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THE recent union of the Canadas under one government, by British authority, ought to interest every American. Were it the spontaneous choice of our northern brethren, nothing could be rightly said against it; but when the Canadians are compelled to be brought under a central government, formed for them in Europe without their consent, it is a right which belongs to every American, to express his opinion of the probable consequences to the people who are to be thus governed, and the consequences to the neighboring States who must daily come in contact with them.

The Canadians can view themselves in no other light than as a conquered nation—originally planted by the French, and conquered by the British, and held in subjection by British bayonets. At this very moment, there are more than twenty thousand soldiers in the Canadas under British pay, and commanded by British officers. These soldiers are now acting the same part in Canada, that a similar body acted in former years in Boston. They are the tools made use of to keep the Canadians in subjection to British bondage, and prevent the will of the majority from being freely expressed. The same power is attempting now to hold Canada in subjection, that attempted in former years to hold France as an appendage of the British empire, and another Joan de Arc may arise to hurl defiance to the British power.

There are many reasons why the Canadians should be free, and there are many reasons also why the United States should be willing to contribute largely towards that object. The border difficulty alone should induce every American to wish to abolish British power in America.

It is in the memory of not very aged persons, what constant border difficulties existed between Spain and the United States, previous to the cession of Louisiana in 1804. The diplomatic correspondence previous to that event, between the ministers of the two nations, is largely occupied with complaints of border aggressions. Mr. Jefferson had sagacity enough to foresee that the least

expense to the United States was to purchase the foreign right and set the inhabitants free; and now those Spanish subjects join in the celebration of Washington's birth day, with as much delight as though they had been originally his own countrymen. Now it is matter of history, that Washington died before the political freedom of the Louisianians was born. In celebrating the birth day of this great man, they celebrate the birth day of political liberty. But while the Louisianians are rejoicing in their present liberty, effected without bloodshed by the good old thirteen States, the unfortunate Canadians—themselves, some of them, fellow laborers with Washington—are still doomed to wear the badge of foreign bondage, and can not join their brethren of Louisiana in celebrating the birth day of Liberty.

Louisiana cost the old States fourteen millions of dollars, which sum has been amply repaid by the extended commerce, besides being a saving of a much larger amount, that would have been expended in warlike preparations and military defences. The lands which were ceded were no particular gain to the old States; they are a common stock, of which Louisiana receives her share, as she does also of the other lands of the Union. Canada would be received into the Union upon the same conditions, and it ought to be the business of the statesmen of the present day, to purchase of Great Britain all her right, title and interest to the Canadas, and, if necessary, pay a hundred millions of dollars. It had better be paid than to suffer the British to domineer any longer in this hemisphere; and that American statesman who dares be bold enough to propose the purchase and to prosecute it to its successful termination, will merit and receive his country's honors, and fix his name upon that escutcheon of fame which keeps in remembrance those who have done good to their fellow men.

Do you not see that England is striving with all her might to erect a great northern power in America, commanded by a viceroy of a British king, and so moulded into form that it can attack these States at his bidding?

Philip of Macedon was on the north of the Grecian States. He and his son succeeded in destroying Grecian Liberty, when the people of Macedon, had they been free to choose, would have preferred a closer union with their southern neighbors. Every school-boy, who reads the orations of Demosthenes, wishes that he



had lived in those times, that he might join in the cry of liberty which that great patriot raised. But you have in these times a greater enemy to liberty, than either Philip or Alexander. Join then, for your country's salvation and your own, the general cry of liberty and freedom, and beware of those who are crying "peace, peace, when there is no peace."—Canada must be free to choose her own rulers, or we shall be involved in constant war.

The last war with Great Britain cost this country more than a hundred million of dollars, and we may safely calculate that as often as every thirty years, we shall have a war with this power, which will cost at least as much; so that in a pecuniary point of view the purchase will be a saving to the nation.

The philanthropist would wish the purchase, to prevent the shedding of human blood. The people of the States can have no desire to kill the Canadians, neither can the Canadians have any desire to kill their brethren of the States; but if they are set on by a foreign power, they are obliged to fight against their will.

The boundary, as it now exists, commences in the East at about 45 degrees of North latitude, and runs thence northerly about three degrees to latitude 48, or thereabouts; thence it continues westerly and south-westerly, until it again reaches the latitude of 45 degrees; thence westerly to the St. Lawrence. Here is a distance of about 700 miles, with no natural separation between the two states. The inhabitants on the borders hardly know whether they are free born Americans or British subjects. The boundary then continues through the middle of the St. Lawrence and the Lakes, southwardly and south-west, to about the 42d degree,—a distance of about 500 miles; then northwardly and north-west to 49 degrees 30 minutes, a distance of 800 miles; thence on the last parallel, due west, to the Rocky Mountains, a distance of 900 miles; thence northerly and north-west to 55 deg.; a distance of 500 miles; thence due west to the Pacific Ocean, about 400 miles,—making the whole distance of the boundary between the two governments at least three thousand four hundred miles, and extending from South to North, in a zigzag direction, through thirteen degrees of latitude, from 42 to 55. So that in one place a man is an American citizen at 55 degrees north; while at another meridian he must travel south until he comes to 42 degrees, before he can claim that privilege. Here is a boundary line that will always create disturbances, and the only way to

prevent it is to unite the two governments, the same that England and Scotland were united, and the union will produce the like happy results.

The greatest cause of difficulty on this extended line will be smuggling, while it is under the control of the British. The revenues to support our national government are derived from imposts on foreign commerce. To weaken this arm of our national strength, the British Government encourage smuggling; and their writers publicly avow that they will maintain possession of Canada, if for no other purpose than to force their manufactures into America through this extended frontier.

By this smuggling business a constant hostility will exist upon the lines, between the smugglers and the officers of the customs. The American officers will seize the goods;—persons in interest will retaliate, and the feuds of the borderers will be justified by the home government, because their great hold upon Canada depends upon exciting animosity between the Canadians and the States. But with all their management, this hold can not last. Canada is destined to be free, and Canada will be free, and it becomes the duty of their brethren of America to assist them in their freedom, without fearing the power of Britain.

Any one, who has noticed the mutations of the kingdoms of the earth, must have perceived the destruction and overthrow of the largest empires has often been brought about by apparently trifling means. We are not to wonder then, if some occurrence trivial in itself may overthrow the mighty power of England, and leave that people to their legitimate government,—the British Isle.

England has governed Canada for seventy-eight years, and now claims perpetual dominion: France was the mother country, and first planted the colony, and held dominion from 1534 to 1763, a period of two hundred and twenty-nine years, and would probably have continued their government much longer, had not the British colonies united with their mother country to destroy the power of France on account of the border troubles. Whenever nations have planted colonies, they have been able to govern them for a season, until the colonies were able to govern themselves—but whenever a people have been conquered by a foreign government, the people thus conquered have uniformly driven out their foreign invaders. History is replete with instances: a few

will suffice to illustrate the subject. The Carthagenians conquered Spain, and occupied it for many years, and were finally dispossessed of it when their power was at its greatest height. The Romans in turn brought Spain under bondage, and held it in servitude for several centuries. The Moors held possession of this same country for more than six hundred years. They established the seat of their empire at Cordova, and intrenched themselves behind the ramparts of a fascinating religion and a splendid monarchy, and strengthened themselves by their alliances with many powerful states; and yet after they thought themselves so firmly fixed in power that nothing could disturb their authority, a daring adventurer from the mountains made their empire tremble, and his successors finally drove these foreign invaders back to the country they came from. And shall it be said that the Canadians, who are free born Americans, have less courage than those rude mountaineers of Spain?

I might go on in multiplying instances where the people of a country have driven out their foreign invaders, and every country would supply materials. Sufficient is recited to prove that the independence of Canada must and will take place; and as Americans we ought not to sit calmly by and see a part of them murdered while the process is going on. Because the treaty making power thought proper to run such a line of boundary in the closet at Paris, from an imperfect map some sixty years ago, does it follow that we must be bound by it in all future time? The British Commissioners, in forming the treaty of '83, desired to make the boundary line between the British possessions and the American States, the center of the Ohio river from Pittsburg to the Mississippi, and that vast and fertile country which is now one of the fairest portions of free America, would have been subject to a British Governor. Our present worthy chief magistrate, and many of the bright stars of the present government would now be British subjects; and for the inhabitants on the eastern side of the Ohio to assist them in their effort to freedom, according to the doctrine of some, would be little less than treason.

The State of New York by their assembly resolved that the boundaries of that State extended north on their western limits to latitude 45 degrees, including the whole of Lake Ontario. The treaty making power conveyed about half the State of New York to the British, and now the citizens of one part of the State which



is free, must not assist the citizens of another part to regain their freedom.

Most of that peninsula which is now called the London district, was included in the original charter of Massachusetts,—a district capable of being one of the noblest States of this Union. The treaty making power placed it on the British side of the boundary, and the children of those holy men who obtained that charter of the British monarch at so great price, are not allowed now to assist their brethren to that freedom which is their birth right.

The Louisianians and the Canadians are many of them descended from the same French families—the blood of those Franks flows in their veins, who formerly drove the Roman legions from Gaul, and more recently expelled the English from France. The former are not now allowed to assist the latter, although bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh.

An eminent American writer of the last century says, "The world may politically, as well as geographically, be divided into four parts, each having a distinct set of interests. Unhappily for the other three, Europe by her army and by her negotiations, by force and by fraud, has in different degrees extended her dominion over them all. Africa, Asia, and America, have successively felt her domination. The superiority she has long maintained has tempted her to plume herself as the mistress of the world, and to consider the rest of mankind as created for her benefit. Men, admired as profound philosophers, have, in direct terms, attributed to her inhabitants a physical superiority, and have gravely asserted that all animals, and with them the human species, degenerate in America—that even dogs cease to bark after having breathed a while in our atmosphere.

Facts have too long supported these arrogant pretensions of Europe. It belongs to us to vindicate the honor of the human race, and to teach that assuming brother moderation. Union will enable us to do it—disunion will add another victim to its triumphs. Let Americans disdain to be the instruments of European greatness; let the thirteen States, bound together in a strict and indissoluble union, concur in erecting one great American system, superior to the control of all transatlantic force or influence, and able to dictate the terms of the connexion between the old and the new world.





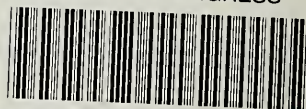








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